

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 1946. NOT TO BE PREVIOUSLY
PUBLISHED, QUOTED FROM OR USED IN ANY WAY.

Following is the text of a note from the Acting Secretary of State to the Charge d'Affaires of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, dated August 19, 1946, concerning the question of the Turkish Straits. Copies of this note have also been transmitted to the Governments of the United Kingdom, France, Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia and Rumania which were among the signatories of the Montreux Convention of July 20, 1936:

"August 19, 1946

"Sir:

"I acknowledge receipt of your note of August 7, 1946, which sets forth the text of the note addressed on the same day by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Government of the Republic of Turkey and express the appreciation of this Government for the courtesy of the Soviet Government in making this information available.

"It will be recalled that the American Embassy in Moscow made available to the Soviet Government in November 1945 a copy of the note which the American Embassy in Ankara delivered to the Turkish Government on November 2, 1945.

"This Government has given careful study to the views expressed by the Soviet Government in its note to the Turkish Government. It would appear from a comparison of this Government's note of November 2, 1945, with the Soviet note to the Turkish Government of August 7, 1946, that the views of the Governments of the United States and of the Soviet Union, while not in entire accord, are in general agreement with regard to the three following proposals set forth in the Soviet note:

- "1. The Straits should be always open to the passage of merchant ships of all countries.
- "2. The Straits should be always open to the passage of warships of the Black Sea powers.
- "3. Passage through the Straits for warships not belonging to the Black Sea powers shall not be permitted except in cases specially provided for."

"Mr. Fedor Orekhov,

"Charge d'Affaires ad interim,

"of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

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"The fourth proposal set forth in the Soviet note does not appear to envisage a revision of the Montreux Convention, as suggested in our note to the Turkish Government of November 2, 1945, but rather the establishment of a new regime which would be confined to Turkey and the other Black Sea powers. It is the view of this Government that the regime of the Straits is a matter of concern not only to the Black Sea powers but also to other powers, including the United States. This Government cannot, therefore, agree with the Soviet view that the establishment of the regime of the Straits should come under the competence of the Black Sea powers to the exclusion of other powers.

"The fifth proposal set forth in the note of the Soviet Government was that Turkey and the Soviet Union should organize joint means of defense of the Straits. It is the firm opinion of this Government that Turkey should continue to be primarily responsible for the defense of the Straits. Should the Straits become the object of attack or threat of attack by an aggressor, the resulting situation would constitute a threat to international security and would clearly be a matter for action on the part of the Security Council of the United Nations.

"It is observed that the note of the Soviet Government contains no reference to the United Nations. The position of the Government of the United States is that the regime of the Straits should be brought into appropriate relationship with the United Nations and should function in a manner entirely consistent with the principles and aims of the United Nations.

"The Government of the United States reaffirms its willingness to participate in a conference called to revise the Montreux Convention.

"Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my high consideration.

"DEAN ACHESON
"Acting Secretary of State"

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